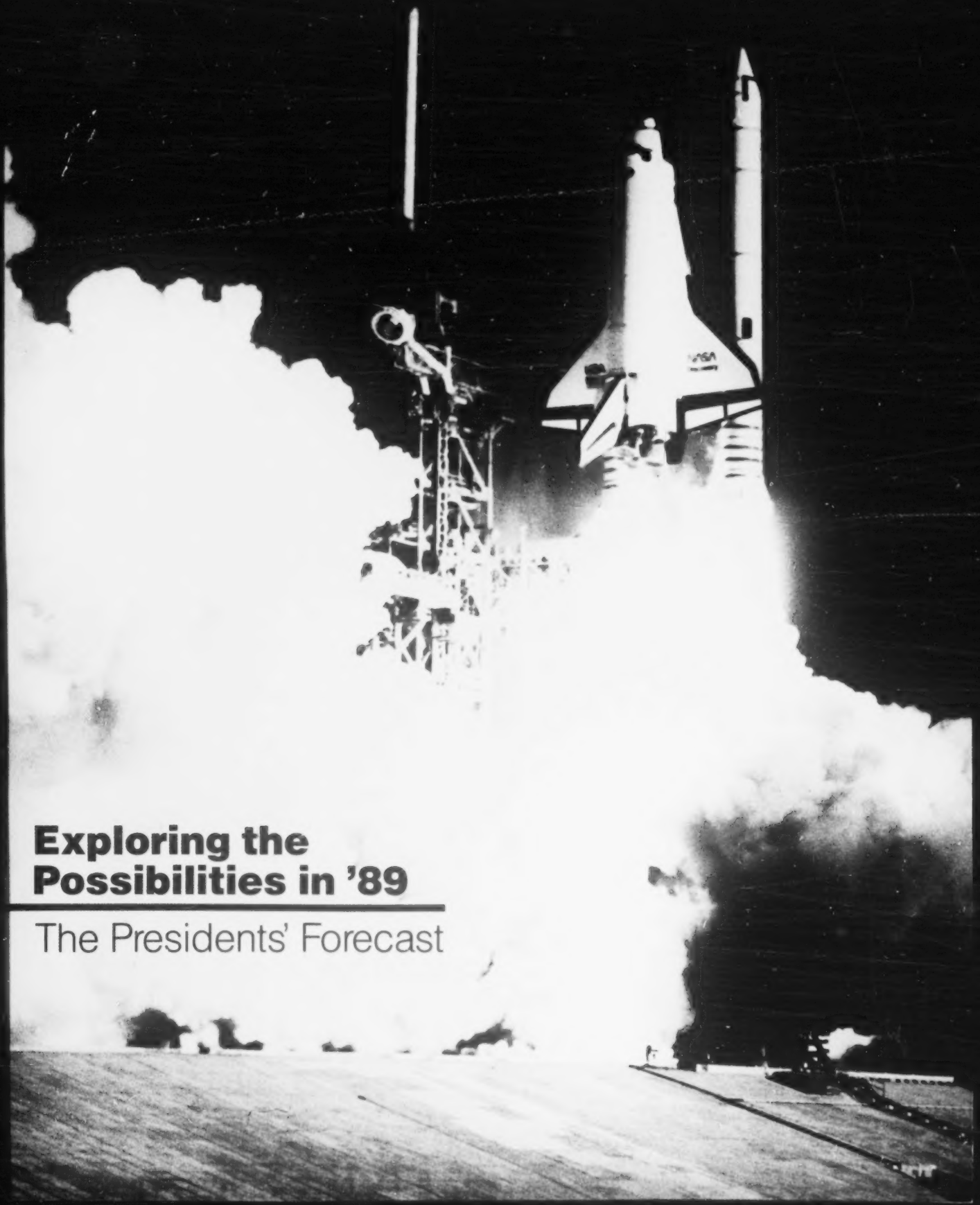
A8140-3
11784 A



Exploring the Possibilities in '89

The Presidents' Forecast

MN

NPTA MANAGEMENT NEWS

VOL. XXIX/NO. 12

Published by
National Paper Trade Association, inc.

Editor & Publisher
William H. Frohlich

Staff Writers
James S. Forberg
Ira B. Newman

Contributing Editors
John J. Buckley
George Cain
Bruce H. Linden

Editorial Assistants
Elizabeth Castaneda
Mary Jo Heidepriem
Geraldine Hislop
F. Berneice Underwood

Production Manager
David G. Farber

Advertising Sales Manager
Frank Bradicich

Art Director
Dagfinn Olsen

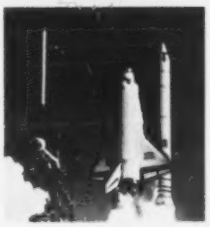
Executive Committee of the Board of Directors
Chairman of the Board
James B. Brame, Jr.
Vice Chairman
James J. Swearingen
Vice Chairman
Michael K. Olthoff
Treasurer
Jonathan O. Bloom
Past Chairman
Frederick J. Stabbert

Ex Officio
President
John J. Buckley
Counsel
Michael B. Weir

BPA Membership Applied for 8/88.

NPTA Management News (ISSN 0739-2214) is published monthly by the National Paper Trade Association, inc., at a subscription rate of $15 per year. Second-class postage PAID at Great Neck, NY, and additional mailing office. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *NPTA Management News*, 111 Great Neck Road, Great Neck, NY 11021. 516-829-3070. Statements of fact and opinion are the responsibility of the authors alone and do not imply approval on the part of NPTA or its member companies. Copyright 1988 by the National Paper Trade Association, inc. Articles may not be reprinted without the publisher's permission. Please address all inquiries to the Editor. Original manuscripts and letters are welcome.

CONTENTS



The Presidents' Forecast

18 **The Outlook for Publishing Papers**
by Norman Wiener
In this first installment of a two-part article, Norman Wiener of Walker Wiener Associates reviews the outlook for the major grades of paper used for publishing. The information is invaluable for merchants planning their 1989 activities.

20 **Set Your Sights on Anaheim in '89**
by David G. Farber
The 1989 NPTA Convention and Exposition is closer than you think. This is the first in a series of articles which will deal exclusively with the '89 Convention. This month—an introduction to the city of Anaheim, and all it has to offer.

22 **The President's Forecast—Exploring the Possibilities in the Year Ahead**
What will the coming year hold for the paper and plastics distribution industry? 10 industry leaders share their perceptions of 1989—for their regions, companies, or product specialties. The year ahead will not be without its difficulties, but it holds a great deal of promise for the merchant.

28 **The Joy of Working**
How do employees feel about the industry and their place in it? In June *MN* mailed out the first annual "Joy of Working" survey. The results paint an intriguing picture of job satisfaction in the industry—and a few surprises.

30 **Golden Eagles Fly High**
Meet NPTA's first "Golden Eagles"—people with over 40 years in the industry. This is an ongoing program and future Golden Eagles will also be recognized in *MN*. Is there one in your company?

36 **Marketing Your Private Brand Chemical Line**
by Rick Butera
Rick Butera of Betco Corporation, Toledo, OH, examines the steps necessary to introduce your private brand chemical line into the marketplace.

DEPARTMENTS

4 **Viewpoint**

6 **Paper Clips**

8 **Industry News**

12 **Merchant Briefings**

14 **The Sales Professional**

16 **Advertiser Index**

17 **Trade Relations**

38 **Activity Charts**

Cover photo courtesy of NASA

The Joy of Working

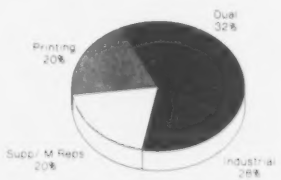
The "Joy of Working" survey form was included in the June issue of MN. The respondents paint an interesting picture for us of job satisfaction in the paper and plastics distribution industry. This survey will be done annually and changes in job satisfaction over time will be tracked.

We have all heard, we have all said, that this is a great industry peopled by those who care about their work. Certainly, it is the individuals behind the bricks and mortar, trucks and products that make the paper and plastics distribution business what it is today. But, let us take a look at how those responding to *MN*'s first Joy of Working survey feel about their industry and their place in it.

Profile of Respondents

The survey form carried in the June issue of MN was answered by 321 people: 65 who identified themselves as printing paper distributors, 90 industrial, 101 dual and 65 suppliers and manufacturers reps.*

SURVEY RESPONDENTS
Percentage by Type of Reader



Further, respondents were in upper management positions, 27% in middle management, 29% in sales and 7% support personnel. This means that almost two-thirds of the respondents hold management positions. About 46% of those filling out the survey were under 40 years of age. Exactly half have been with their companies more than 10 years.

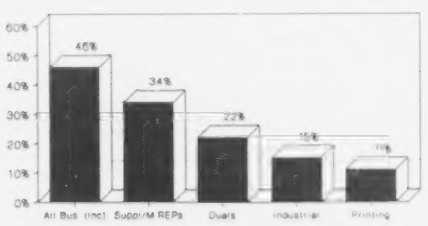
Not surprisingly, 21% have been with their companies more than 20 years. This industry can boast of the longevity of its population. NPTA's recent introduction of the Golden Eagle Awards for industry people with over 40 years of service generated 120 requests in the first three months.

The companies that employ these people tend to be larger than one would guess —an indication of the growth in company size across the country. 47% work for companies with 100 or fewer employees, 36% in companies with 100-500 people and 17% work for companies with over 500 employees.

Plans to Leave

When asked if they expected to change jobs in the next three years, the overwhelming answer was "No." Only 21% thought they would, and of those, more than half wanted better salaries. In a recent study conducted by *INC.* magazine of their readers' job satisfaction, it was revealed that 46% of employees across the country had plans to leave. In this case, the paper distribution industry is head and shoulders above business in general. This is a strong indicator of overall job satisfaction.

JOB HUNTING
Who's looking for a Job?: Next 3 Years



Evaluation of Job Satisfaction

It is tricky to ask the right questions that will get at employees' feelings about his job, his supervisors and his company. In the case of top management responding, we also run the risk of hearing nothing but superlatives about the company.

The survey designers focused the questions in this area around the four following topics:

- Company Pride
- Job Satisfaction
- Compensation Satisfaction
- Perception of Supervisors

Where appropriate, differences among printing paper distributors, industrial, dual and suppliers/manufacturers reps will be shown, as well as company size, age or number of years with the company.

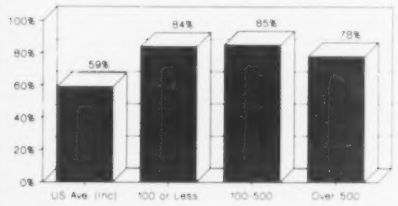
Company Pride

It is clear that our people are proud of their companies—83% said so and an equal number felt that they contribute to their company's success. It was no surprise that upper management was the most proud, followed by middle management, then sales and, least of all, support personnel. Those working for printing paper distributors were more positive about their companies than the rest. Employees of smaller companies also had the edge, but all responses were above what *INC.* reported for all industries. They found that in the smaller companies (the *INC.* 500), 68% of employees were proud of their company compared with only 64% for large companies (specifically, those companies with more than 100 employees showed employee pride to be only 59%). The paper and plastics distribution industry is far ahead of the rest of the country.

*Statistical analysis of the responses leads the reader to paint a picture of the entire industry. Caution must be exercised because of the sample size, character and make-up of the reading audience and the use of a self-selecting response mechanism. These results should be looked at in a general way.

COMPANY PRIDE

Paper Distribution: The Most Proud



Employee pride even in the paper and plastics distribution industry decreases a little with the larger companies. Certainly, the challenge to the larger companies is to make them "feel" like smaller companies.

Job Satisfaction

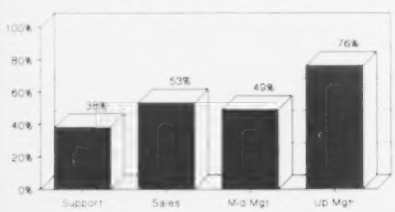
The elements looked at here included an analysis of how rewarding those responding felt their jobs are and whether or not each felt that his job leads to advancement. Again, as in overall "company pride," the overwhelming report was that people found their jobs to be rewarding. 76% said so, but only 59% felt that there was significant opportunity for advancement in their companies.

By company size, once again, the smaller companies provided respondents with a more rewarding experience (and identical statistics to job satisfaction). Printing paper distributors led the way in this area also, followed by dual, industrial and suppliers/manufacturers reps.

In terms of advancement, upper management was way out front. Suprisingly, sales people felt that they had more opportunity for advancement than middle management. Across all industries, *INC.* magazine found that 41% of sales people in large companies and 49% of sales people with smaller companies felt there was opportunity for advancement compared with 53% in our industry.

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITY

Who Wants Most to get Ahead?



Compensation Satisfaction

The question about an employee's compensation package was not further defined. It was meant to be general, but may mean different things to different people.

Overall satisfaction with compensation across all respondents was 64%. Only about 15% said that they were dissatisfied. When we look at compensation by job title, the picture becomes more clear. Upper management was the most satisfied—78% said they were happy with their current compensation package. Sales was next at 65% and middle management with 52%. Only 33% of support personnel were satisfied. These findings for paper and plastics distribution are very consistent with all companies throughout the country as demonstrated in *INC.* magazine's study.

By age, the there was good consistency across all categories except at the high and low ends of the scale, as one might expect.

PERCEPTION BY EMPLOYEES

About Company's Sharing Information

When we look at the number of years with the company, we find that satisfaction with the compensation package grows each year: From only 45% satisfaction for employees with less than three years with the company, to 78% for those with 20 years or more.

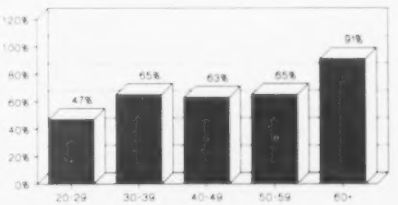
Perception of Supervisors

Considered here are two employee perceptions: how effectively does the company share information with its employees, and how approachable are one's superiors.

In the first part, approximately two-thirds of respondents felt that their superiors shared information about the company on a regular basis. This feeling decreased as company size increased, indicating that larger companies have more difficulty in disseminating information to all employees. Printing paper distributors were evidently doing a bit better than the rest, and in terms of job titles, support personnel felt the most left out. Upper management (the disseminators of the company information) understandably felt that a good job was being done in this area. Surprisingly, sales people were a bit more positive about the regularity of the information flow than were those middle managers responding to our survey.

COMPENSATION SATISFACTION

By Age



In the area of approachability of superiors, respondents were even more positive. 81% reported that the people they worked for were easily approached. This is certainly an important part of company communication and an employee's overall satisfaction.

Employee job satisfaction is influenced by many factors. This MN survey has revealed that the smaller companies tend to be satisfying their employees more effectively than the larger companies, but not by much. This is consistent with other studies of business across the country, including the *INC.* magazine survey. The smaller companies may have an edge due to more personal contact between top management and all levels of employees. Also, the printing paper distributors fared better than the rest, but no reasons for this can be determined from this brief survey. Company pride, a precious commodity, also was being engendered effectively by most companies in our industry. Some felt that their contribution to a small company was more significant than it would be in a larger entity. And that may be true.

With the growth of our industry—an industry that requires talented and committed people to make it grow stronger—the employee satisfaction issue is one that deserves our attention. The "Joy" in what we do must always be there—for all of us.